

# 5/30 Nicholas, age 13

[Link to video](#) Private video; ask Daniel K. for view access. No voice recorded.

## Overall Takeaways:

Nicholas is 13, and did a coding camp with Scratch when he was 10. He made a flappy bird game in Scratch. But since then, he hasn't done much more coding.

He considered doing an after-school Scratch class, but heard that it was really basic. Recently, they got Hopscotch, but he has only spent 10 minutes on it.

He enjoyed playing Fizzics, but basically was stuck at Level 8 because he didn't realize he had to go to the Clubhouse to get the next quest.

He picked up Processing very fast, although needed some support in writing the correct syntax with () and ; and figuring out where the coordinates should be. He did the "Color the Bear" exercise, and moved onto the Pizza one with custom functions. He used what he learned about changing the colors to change the colors of the Pizza on his own. (even inside of the custom function for pepperoni)

He said that he liked doing the Processing sketches more than Fizzics, "because of the freedom".

He wants to be able to make art and import it into a game, and wants to make his own game, specifically an "addictive" game where it's challenging to beat.

Nicholas is a motivated learner who already has a grasp of basic coding concepts from Scratch. (His age and coding skill being quite high in our range, it's probably bad that he's getting stuck in Fizzics due to unclear quest progression.) He would benefit from more non-linear lesson/quest content. He is motivated to create his own project.

Nick's dad has paid for Hopscotch, although Nick hasn't played it much. Hopscotch is iPad only, and there is very low friction to paying for it via your Apple Id.

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### Did coding camp with Scratch

- there weren't that many instructions.
- Made flappy bird game with scratch
- reused commands from another scratch game
- was 10
- Now is 13
- has played minecraft before

- Also did like 20 min in school. Might have taken the class, but heard that it was more for 2-5 grade. Really simple stuff. (Taught by a parent.)
- (His school is K-8 grade)
- There's not that many after school programs available.

Dad runs DevOps, has been in a lot of startups.

- Wants son to be self-directed in learning. Not like "you have to learn to code".
- Trying Hopscotch right now. 3 weeks ago.
- Just 10 minutes so far.
- Dad: yeah, we paid for it...it's free for 7 days, so it's already been 2 weeks. Will let him have some time and see how it goes. Can cancel it later.

- Technical stuff
  - Piping audio to HDMI (good) suppresses speaker audio (bad)
    - Add external speaker out from recording laptop?
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- Intro
  - He hits the physical "Hack" button on the keyboard
  - Definitely reading all the instructions.
    - Leaning in a bit to read.
  - It wasn't clear to him which button is the Hack button and which button is the Clubhouse button.
- Fizzics
  - Lost a ball on level 5
    - tried to complete it with one remaining ball
      - Confused when that didn't work
      - Tried slinging diamonds into goal
      - Should all levels give feedback if there aren't enough balls remaining to complete?
      - Didn't realize there was more dialog at first
  - Weird oscillation w/ fling tool at upper-right corner
  - Level 8:
    - First Toolbox quest: tried to interact with Fizzics while flipped
    - Made ball suuuuper tiny
    - Told him to let us know if he wants a hint.
      - Yup, he's stuck. I told him to try the clubhouse for more dialog.
    - "It says you can go to level 10, but it seems like it's impossible."
  - "It's frustrating, but not in a bad way"

- “It’s, like, *somewhat* addicting, but not in a bad way”
    - “It’s good, it makes you think. It’s not mind-numbing like watching TV.”
  - 
  - Tried un-maximizing window
- System App
  - Wasn’t clear that System and Fizzics were separate apps
  - Felt that textual information was “a form that relates to kids” which I found interesting
  - Thought it would be more natural for the explanatory dialogs to wait for input/click to progress (e.g. “click to continue”)
- Quests
  - “Wait for launch” steps should switch focus to app if it’s running
  - “It’s kind of cool, like the grumpy guy”
- Processing
  - Quickly tried FtH, saw code and thought he’d done something wrong
  - Bear
    - Tried clicking around on the bear, re-read the “Challenge: Color this bear”, tried clicking some more [This would be a start button.]
    - --Gave him a bit of a lesson on drawing shapes with coordinates. Prompted him to try making the ears bigger.
    - When Mary prompted to change one ear to W:200,H:200, immediately tried nonuniform increase to W:300,H:200
    - --Gave him a lesson on fill(...) and HSB values. [one number is gray, 3 numbers to make color] Prompted him to try some different numbers to get different colors. And then try changing the color of the eyes.
    - Asked, do you want to continue adding to this sketch, or do you want to try another one? He chose to try another sketch.
  - Pizza
    - Right away, changed the color of the pizza and background using knowledge from previous lesson.
    - Wasn’t clear that he needed do use parentheses in a function call
    - Coordinates:
      - “Oh, I thought the max was 100”
  - Lack of realtime feedback to changes seemed to be an impediment
  - Liked the bear + pizza sketch stuff more than Fizzics / System
    - “I liked this the best, because there’s more freedom”
  - A project that you might like to do
    - “Like making a game, or...?”
    - “Can you export the art you make and put that into a game”
    - “I’d want to make my own game. An addicting game. “
      - What’s an addictive game?
      - “A game where you die a lot and it’s hard to beat a level.”

### Ben's Notes:

- This user had trouble finding the Flip-To-Hack button. Is there any way we can try to make it more visible in certain cases?
- The text scaling is enough of a problem that this user was leaning into the laptop to try and read it. I think we **really** need some kind of temporary solution.
- This user liked collecting gems. It's a good carrot we don't use a lot in existing Fizzics content.
- This user had trouble finding the restart button when failing a level. I think we should consider more explicit messaging for it when in a fail state.
- Fling doesn't work on the bottom on the screen or sides - there's no room for the mouse to move. We need to solve this somehow.
- The user got confused about the end of the first Fizzics quest, and didn't register that he needed to go back to the Clubhouse.
  - He appeared to be already getting text fatigue at this point.
- Level 8 in Fizzics does not effectively message that it is not beatable without flipping.
- The initial System app quest has far too much text for this user - I'd forgotten how much it has, we really need to trim it down a lot or break it up more.
- The user was confused a few times about what app to try and use, because the quests weren't checking what app was focused.
- Quests that ask a user to change values in the Toolbox need to more explicitly message the need to Flip back - the dichotomy between the back and front of apps is not explained well enough.
- This user REALLY liked Processing.
  - He wanted to use it to make assets for games!
  - I think this is a strong indicator that the P5.js episode is exactly where we want to be going.
- Cosimo pointed out in the post-playtest discussion that this user is a good example of someone we might want to skip ahead in the episode flow, since he's coming in with some advanced knowledge. I agree and think we should do some targeted thinking about making nonlinear in quests, quest structures, and possibly future episodes - but I think it should be off the table for the initial 4 episodes of the remix, at least.